

Teacher Competency: An In-depth Concept Analysis with Walker & Avant's Framework

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The skills and knowledge that help teachers succeed academically are known as “teacher competencies”. To refine, explore, and upgrade their teaching methods, teachers must increase their skill and knowledge. Research on teachers' competences usually concentrate more emphasis on instructors' responsibilities in the classroom than on their competencies (Selvi & Peter Lang, 2010).

Methodology: Walker & Avant model is being used for the concept analysis of “Teacher Competency”. This model was introduced in 1986. It is the most commonly used methodology in nursing as it is easy for graduates to understand and describe the processes in depth. Concept analysis, concept synthesis, and concept derivation are the three different processes that were described by Walker & Avant in 2011 (Mc Ewen & Wills, 2014).

Results: This conceptual analysis can serve as a valuable reference for educational institution administrators, evaluators, teachers, and curriculum designers. It emphasizes the critical components of teacher competency, which can help with focused professional development and curriculum refinement, ultimately boosting educational quality and effectiveness.

Conclusion: The concept analysis presented offers a broad theoretical comprehension regarding the nature of teacher competency, including its goals, characteristics, components, and developmental process. With the growing significance of nurse educator competency-based training, as highlighted by major medical education institutions in recent years, it has become apparent that curriculum modification and design are necessary.

Keywords: Borderline case; Competency; Concept analysis; Contrary case; Model case; Nurse educator; Professional; Walker & Avant Model.

1. Introduction

The skills and knowledge that help teachers succeed academically are known as “teacher competencies”. To refine, explore, and upgrade their teaching methods, teachers must increase their skill and knowledge. Research on teachers' competences usually concentrate more emphasis on instructors' responsibilities in the classroom than on their competencies (Selvi & Peter Lang, 2010). The combination of information, abilities, attitudes, values, and personal traits that enables a teacher to act in a situation in a way that is professional and appropriate. A well-organized educational system promotes the development of a wide range of competencies and points instructors in the direction of ongoing professional and personal growth as well as lifelong learning (Simonović, 2021). Competencies are a dynamic, multifaceted category that is always evolving, enhancing, and improving as a result of several cause-and-effect relationships between diverse circumstances (Simonović, 2021).

The standard of education has drastically changed in recent years. Students need to learn that will enable them to work cooperatively and sensitively as a team, make decisions, effectively organize and manage their time, listen to one another, and select the appropriate communication style when necessary. As a result, we have realized that we need 21st-century talents in order to achieve these new teaching standards (Tasci, 2020).

The reason why authors chose to conduct a concept analysis on this topic is that there is ongoing interest and discussion in nursing education, research, and practice regarding the competency of nurse educators. The discussion on how to enhance teacher preparation, professional development, and evaluation can be furthered by analyzing this idea.

2. Methodology

Walker & Avant model is being used for the concept analysis of “Teacher Competency”. This model was introduced in 1986. It is the most commonly used methodology in nursing as it is easy for graduates to understand and describe the processes in depth. Concept analysis, concept synthesis, and concept derivation are the three different processes that were described by Walker & Avant in 2011 (McEwen & Wills, 2014). “Teacher Competency” concept will be analyzed by the concept Analysis process and these steps are as follows:

- 2.1 - Select a concept.
- 2.2 - Determine the purpose of the analysis.
- 2.3 - Identification of all possible uses of the concept.
- 2.4 - Determine the defining characteristics/attributes.
- 2.5 - Model case identification with examples.
- 2.6 - Identification of related borderline, contrary and model cases.
- 2.7 - Determination of antecedents and consequences.
- 2.8 - Defining empirical referents.

2.1. Selection of a concept and its significance in nursing

The importance of the topic of “teacher competency” is due to its direct influence on the quality of education. When teachers possess the required competencies, they can effectively educate and equip students for their future pursuits. Conversely, insufficient teacher competency may lead to ineffective teaching, resulting in unfavorable academic outcomes and adversely affecting the success of students. Therefore, there is a need for teachers who are competent and have the ability to support students in learning and achieving their goals. The importance of the teacher competency cannot be denied as mentioned in above cited studies. The concept of teacher competency has high significance because of its effectiveness in the educational system. It is essential to raise the level of the programs used in teacher education because teachers must possess characteristics that can influence the standard of education (Tasci, 2020).

The quality of nursing and health care will increase in many ways by thoroughly grasping the concept of competency and using it as the benchmark for outstanding nursing practice. First and foremost, better patient care will be provided in a highly complicated, constantly evolving health care environment. Cost containment will also be aided by competent care. Patients will receive competent, high-quality care from nurses who keep up with new knowledge and use evidence-based theories in their care (Valloze, 2009).

2.2. Purpose/Aim of the analysis

A concept analysis of teacher competency aims to give readers a thorough understanding of the meaning of the phrase “teacher competency” and the main elements that make it up. The objective is to create a framework for evaluating and improving teacher competency and to create a shared understanding of the concept. It can serve as a foundation for the creation of reliable and rigorous tests of teacher competency.

Policymakers and practitioners can benefit from recommendations from a concept analysis on how to enhance teacher preparation, professional development, and evaluation. The concept clarification will help the teachers and instructors to modify their teaching strategies accordingly and make them more productive and goal-oriented.

2.3. Definition of Teacher Competency

As the term “teacher competency” is made of two words “teacher” and “competency”, dictionary meaning of the separate words and the collective term “teacher competency” is searched in different dictionaries and literature which are given below:

2.3.1. Teacher

Teacher is defined in one dictionary as “One that teaches” (Merriam-Webster, 2023). In addition to this, the other said that Teacher is “someone whose job is to teach in a school or college” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023).

2.3.2. Competency

Competency is defined as “an important skill that is needed to do a job” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023). Besides that, it is “possession of sufficient knowledge or skill and legal authority, ability, or admissibility,” (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Klemp (1980) defined Competence as a fundamental quality of a person that leads to efficient and/or excellent performance at work (Chouhan & Srivastava, 2014). A competency is the ability to successfully use or use knowledge, skills, talents, behaviors, and personal traits to carry out particular responsibilities, fill a specific role, or hold a particular position. Competencies are hence basic traits of persons that denote behaviors or ways of thinking that apply in a variety of contexts and persist for a long time (Chouhan & Srivastava, 2014). Since the word “competency” is frequently employed by different people in various circumstances, it has several definitions. This phrase is used in relation to both job performance and teacher education (Nessipbayeva, 2012).

2.3.3. Teacher Competence

These two words “Teacher” and “Competency” are commonly used separately. Therefore, it is difficult to find the definition in dictionaries and used literature definition only. Teachers need to be highly competent in a variety of areas to deal with the complex difficulties of the present world. The main participants in the educational process are the teachers. Training and education's effectiveness is based on participants' knowledge, level of performance and readiness. The teacher of the twenty-first century must be able to offer students learning opportunities that are supported by technology and understand how technology can facilitate student learning (Nessipbayeva, 2012).

2.3.4. Identification of all possible uses of the concept

It has been explicitly stated in the literature and observed that the concept of teacher competency is used everywhere. The literature search suggested that the concept teacher competency can be used in health care as well as in other disciplines e.g. education and manufacturing companies. In health care it can be used in teaching with the students of health care professional, patients and their families. Teacher competency can be used to evaluate teacher performance and develop curriculum and instructional materials to satisfy student's requirement. It may also be utilized to promote career growth, certify teachers, increase job satisfaction and retention, and improve student learning. The teacher's instructional actions have a direct impact on the students' learning. Good teachers

are aware that structuring instruction to achieve success is a critical component of their job. Teachers utilize educational materials and learning technology that are suitable for the class's age, needs and skills. Competent teachers are using comprehensive and integrated sets of knowledge and abilities (Shekhawat & Thakur, 2014).

2.3.5. Surrogate terms

Teacher competency, teacher skills, and teacher qualities are surrogate terms used in the literature to describe the teacher competency concept. Additionally, in few situations, there is no difference between teacher performance, capability, task, activity, Meta-competence and professional performance etc. (Yazdani & Farmad, 2016).

2.4. Determination of the defining characteristics/attributes

According to Walker & Avant, defining attributes are the hallmarks and unfold over time. Moreover, they are considered as the center of significance for concept analysis (Schiller, 2018). During literature search and review found some frequent content/attributes for teacher competency are body of knowledge (applied, tacit), expertise (specialized), and intellectual ability (Yazdani & Farmad, 2016).

2.5. Model, borderline and contrary cases

2.5.1. Model case

A model case explains all critical characteristics of a concept (Walker & Avant, 2011). According to McKenna, the clarity and trustworthiness of the concept are increased by using real example from routine life that serves as a model case (Yazdani & Farmad, 2016) and that is as follows:

Sara has ten years of teaching experience as a nurse educator. She has a nursing master's degree. One of her primary responsibilities is to deliver lectures in the classroom. To assess the quality of these lectures, criteria are typically created at the university level. Delivering lectures is a task that demands skill development (communication, presentation, questioning, active listening, interactional abilities, etc.) and knowledge along with extensive experience. Making decisions is a key component of effective presentation skills (for example, the amount and how to engage the students).

Sara is an experienced teacher, she can easily deliver a lecture and has the ability to recognize students' responses and solve the problem quickly. For example, in a question-and-answer session, she has the ability to know the student's points of interest and then gives them answers normally, without stress or subjectivity. She modifies instruction to meet the different requirements of her students by utilizing a variety of instructional methods and materials. She routinely evaluates the progress of her students and modifies her training as necessary.

2.6. Borderline Case

Alia is a nurse educator. She has subject knowledge and can plan lessons, but she doesn't have the ability to manage a classroom, and she cannot engage her students during lectures. She may struggle with classroom management, but she is unable to modify instruction to meet the different requirements of her students. In this situation, her competency level may not be clearly defined as either competent or incompetent. Alia may be making progress in some areas, but she also needs additional training and support to develop her skills in other areas.

2.6.1. Contrary case

Amina is a new nurse educator who has just started her teaching career. This is her first experience teaching nursing students. One of her main responsibilities is to deliver lectures in the classroom. But she has never experienced it before. Additionally, no clear idea for the presentation and subsequent evaluation has been provided to her. She has no experience in this area, either in terms of observation or information gained from experience. She lacks command over all of its aspects. When the students raise questions during her initial presentation sessions, she has trouble keeping her words together, keeping the class on task, grabbing their attention, and responding. She usually doesn't care what the students think because she just wants to complete her lecture. She has no courage to communicate the underlying problem of the students. She is typically not very good in these situations since she has never employed abilities like active listening, using body language, and other similar techniques.

2.7. Determination of antecedents and consequences

According to Walker & Avant, some of the events must be present/happen before the concept and are called antecedents. Conversely, consequences are that the concept might lead to or result in certain events (Schiller, 2018).

2.7.1. Antecedents

According to the reviewed literature there are indisputable antecedents for teacher competency, which are as follows: education and training, ongoing professional development, and teacher motivation. These will be discussed below:

2.7.2. Education and Training

The level of education and quality of training received by a teacher can have a significant impact on their competency as an educator. Teachers with advanced degrees or specialized training programs are frequently better prepared to handle the demands of the classroom.

2.7.3. Ongoing Professional Development

Teachers can participate in ongoing professional development to expand their knowledge and skills, stay up to date on research and best practises, and improve their teaching techniques.

2.7.4. Teacher Motivation

Teachers who are motivated to improve their knowledge and skills and to help students learn are more likely to be competent.

2.7.5. Consequences of Teacher Competency

Several researches have been done to see the impact of teacher competency on teachers and students. Most crucial extractions are given below:

2.7.6. Professional performance

Professional performance is the body of knowledge and capabilities that are necessary to provide high-quality design services. A teacher should perform professionally and have to support students in learning and growth.

2.7.7. Competency based curriculum

Curriculum competencies have two types one is curriculum development competencies and other is curriculum implementation competencies. Curriculum competencies are knowledge about curriculum development, design, elements, models, approaches, and process. Curriculum competencies are essential for teachers to effectively teach and provide an effective education service (Selvi & Peter Lang, 2010).

2.7.8. Competency-based assessment

Teachers can include their students in the process of ongoing improvement by using competency-based evaluation. The involvement and engagement of the learner are advantage of competency-based assessment. When competency-based assessment is meaningfully embedded into classroom practice, students are encouraged to create their own goals and reflect on their own learning when given authentic challenges.

2.7.9. Positive teacher morale

Teachers who feel competent and effective in their roles are more likely to have positive job satisfaction and morale. Teachers who are competent and effective in their roles are more likely to be satisfied and motivated at work.

2.8. Empirical Referent

This step is frequently referred to as concept operationalization. The Walker & Avant (1995) suggest that abstract concepts can be used as empirical indicators for research and performance. In searching literatures, an empirical referent found in which quality standards are shown in concentric circles on the “Wheel of Competency Assessment”. Fitness for Purpose, which is connected to the concept of “constructive alignment” between assessment, instruction, and learning, serves as the fundamental quality criterion for all competence assessments. It is argued that the “Interactive examination” assesses teacher competency, and it is suggested that the “Interactive examination” satisfies the requirements for reliable, valid, and ideally synoptic assessments needed for high-stakes choices (Jönsson, 2008). There is another empirical referent found in a study which name is “Interpretive model of competent performance” (based on Roelofs and Sanders, 2003).

3. Conclusion

The concept analysis presented offers a broad theoretical comprehension regarding the nature of teacher competency, including its goals, characteristics, components, and developmental process. With the growing significance of nurse educator competency-based training, as highlighted by major medical education institutions in recent years, it has become apparent that curriculum modification and design are necessary. To determine if nurse educators have attained the necessary abilities, rigorous evaluation techniques that combine formative and summative assessments, such as practical demonstrations, peer reviews, and self-assessments, are required.

Ongoing competence can be ensured by highlighting the significance of continuous professional development (CPD) to maintain updated competencies and by proposing a CPD structure that fosters lifelong learning. Technology integration can improve teaching and evaluation procedures. Examples of this include virtual reality, simulation software, and e-learning tools. A step-by-step implementation strategy for migrating to a competency-

based education model, including timetables, resource allocation, training for present educators, and pilot testing, can help with this transition.

This conceptual analysis can serve as a valuable reference for educational institution administrators, evaluators, teachers, and curriculum designers. However, additional research is required to determine how competency-based education should be applied what differences it should have with current training approaches, and what attributes a competency-based curriculum model should possess.

Declarations

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No funding has been reported.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Consent for Publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

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